

Pearson Air Museum offers outreach program to local students



Photo by [Steven Lane](#)

Pearson Air Museum director Laureano Mier tells students in David Richards' metal-fab class at Fort Vancouver High School how career training can pay off in the working world.

By [Tom Vogt](#)
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Photo by Steven Lane

Students such as Josh Pharris can reflect on possible careers in the aviation field through the educational outreach program at Pearson Air Museum.



By Steven Lane

Pearson Air Museum director Laureano Mier guides Fort Vancouver High School metal fab students on a tour of Aero Maintenance, the fixed-base operator at Pearson Field.

"You want education to be real and relevant," said David Richards, a teacher at Fort Vancouver High School.

Richards has discovered one way to show students that what they're learning really matters: You show how people entrust their lives to your skills.

One place to do that is Pearson Air Museum, which has an educational outreach program for a range of age groups.

A few days ago, Richards brought more than 20 students from his metal-fabrication and welding class to Pearson Air Museum to explore career opportunities in aviation.

It's the sort of presentation that Laureano Mier, manager of the air museum, delivers frequently. Each month, the museum hosts a couple of school groups. The visit can include the history and science of flying, as well as a look at the working airport at Pearson Field.

For some of Richards' students, Wednesday's session was the first step in an extended relationship.

Several of them have volunteered to undertake a community service project for the museum; they will rebuild the engine mount of a single-seat airplane to accommodate a different power plant.

"They will get a real hands-on look" at what shapes up to be a well-paying technical field, Mier said.

The students stepped into the project as a way to fulfill some of the community service hours required of seniors, Richards said. But there was more to it than that.

Most of the students have already achieved their required hours; now, Richards said, they're working on the engine-mount project for the fun of it.

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